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IFI Liaison Officer

WHAT DOES YOUR POSITION AS INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTION (IFI) LIAISON OFFICER ENTAIL?

Blanco (Manila): Most of my time is spent attending to Asian Development Bank (ADB) enquiries on loan and technical assistance projects and requests for assistance on related issues. Canadian firms usually send their requests through e-mail and fax. These cover Bank policies, procedures and practices. In the case of consultants, requests focus on registration of their expertise in the Bank's Data on Consultants (DACON) and Data on Individual Consultants (DICON) systems, and project-related concerns such as the short listing of consulting firms, background information on project profiles, terms of reference for service requirements, and proposed consultants' budgets and recommendations.

Hutson (Bridgetown): I dedicate about 40-50% of my time to IFI-related activities. We estimate that 60% of all government infrastructure works in our territory are funded by an IFI, so it's an area we concentrate on. We also work directly with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). Since it's a small bank, we don't have an Office of Liaison with International Financial Institutions (OLIFI) or an executive director like large IFIs. So, we fill the gap between the Commercial Division and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) office. We work closely with the Canadian Director of the CDB, who is also the head of our CIDA Division in Bridgetown. As the Technical Advisor for Procurement to the Canadian Director of the CDB, I review project Board papers, provide feedback on procurement matters, and assist Canadian firms with procurement issues.

HOW DO YOU PURSUE IFI-RELATED OPPORTUNITIES?

Blanco (Manila): The most effective way is through the ADB Web site (www.adb.org). It holds a lot of information about the Bank including proposed project requirements, results of short listings, contract awards and policy trends. Also, it's important for me to maintain a strong network of contacts with ADB staff to research and address issues relevant to Canadian commercial interests and to obtain relevant documentation.

Hutson (Bridgetown): Once you understand the project cycle and how IFIs work, finding opportunities is fairly straightforward. Project appraisal documents, available through OLIFI offices, provide much information on procurement opportunities. Pipeline information is also important to obtain.

HOW DO YOU INFORM CANADIAN COMPANIES OF THESE OPPORTUNITIES?

Blanco (Manila): I pass on any available opportunities during the course of answering company enquiries and requests for updates. I also contribute to general promotional write-ups about the Bank in publications such as *CanadExport*.

Hutson (Bridgetown): We developed a system that allows companies to tell us which projects interest them. Whenever something significant happens on their projects, we automatically advise them. When we don't know who to advise, we rely on the International Business Opportunities Centre (IBOC) and Industry Canada.